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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN; USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KWBG PHUM PREL PTER ASEC CASC GZ IS

SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: TWO IDF SOLDIERS AND ONE PALESTINIAN INJURED IN GAZA; ONE IDF SOLDIER INJURED IN THE WEST BANK
-- JUNE 9, 2005 (1100 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

11. (SBU) Summary: Palestinian militants fired some 17 mortar rounds and rockets on Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip overnight June 8-9. Two IDF soldiers were lightly injured when a mortar struck near their outpost in the vicinity of Neve Dekalim. The barrage followed an IAF missile strike June 8 at a vehicle reportedly carrying three Hamas militants near Khan Yunis. The militants escaped unharmed. IDF soldiers injured one militant June 9 near Khan Yunis when soldiers opened fire on a group of militants attempting to launch rockets at the Gush Katif settlement bloc. In the West Bank, an IDF soldier was lightly wounded in Kufr Aqab village, south of Ramallah, when a firebomb was thrown at the IDF jeep during a search operation in the village June 8. A Palestinian youth stabbed an Israeli policeman on Jaffa road in central Jerusalem June 8. The attacker was arrested and reportedly admitted during interrogation that he carried out the attack because he had not been paid his wages in the bakery where he works. IDF soldiers arrested a total of 13 Palestinians throughout the West Bank June 8-9, including four PIJ members in Tulkarm who are accused of planning a double suicide attack in Jerusalem. End Summary.

West Bank

12. (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: According to Palestinian sources, an IDF soldier was lightly wounded in Kufr Aqab village, south of Ramallah, when a firebomb was thrown at the IDF jeep during a search operation in the village June 8.

-- Injury: Palestinian and Israeli media reported that a Palestinian youth stabbed an Israeli policeman on Jaffa road in central Jerusalem June 8. The attacker, a resident of Shufat refugee camp, was immediately arrested. During interrogation, the attacker stated he carried out the attack because he had not been paid his wages in the bakery where he works.

-- Arrests: Palestinian media sources reported that the IDF arrested four members of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in Tulkarm June 8. According to Israeli security sources, the PIJ cell is responsible for planning a double suicide attack in Jerusalem.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian sources, the IDF arrested seven Fatah members in Arabah village, near Jenin, June 8.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian media, IDF troops entered into the villages of Samou, and Dahriya, south of Hebron, and arrested two Palestinians June 8.

-- Security Incidents: According to Palestinian sources, Israeli settlers attacked Palestinians in the Old City of Hebron and set on fire a commercial store June 8. No injuries were reported.

13. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

-- Palestinian media reported that Palestinian lawyers went on strike June 8 to protest lawlessness and lack of respect for lawyers and other law enforcement bodies, including courthouses and prosecutors. The strike was staged particularly because of the kidnapping of Ahmad Damanhouri, a lawyer from Ramallah, who was kidnapped by masked gunmen in front of the Ramallah Magistrate court. The kidnapping apparently was meant to prevent Damanhouri from appearing in court, as he was released several hours later.

Gaza

14. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: The IDF reported that IDF soldiers injured one Palestinian June 9 west of Khan Yunis when they opened fire on a group of militants attempting to launch rockets (see "Shootings").

-- Injuries: The IDF reported that two IDF soldiers were lightly injured June 8 in a mortar attack on an IDF outpost near Neve Dekalim (see "Mortars/Rockets").

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF and Israeli media reported that an IAF helicopter fired two missiles at a vehicle carrying three Hamas militants east of Khan Yunis in the late afternoon June 8. According to media reports, the militants, who escaped unharmed, were planning to carry out rocket attacks against Israeli targets.

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants launched a total of 17 rockets and mortar rounds at Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip the evening of June 8-9, all but one targeting Netzirim were aimed at the settlements in the Gush Katif settlement bloc. Two IDF soldiers were lightly injured when a mortar shell landed near their outpost in the vicinity of Neve Dekalim (see "Injuries").

-- Shootings: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants launched four shooting attacks at IDF soldiers June 8-9. IDF soldiers initiated two shooting incidents in the same period, with soldiers opening fire at Palestinians preparing to launch rockets at Israeli and Israeli settler targets from the area around Khan Yunis. One Palestinian was injured in the IDF action west of Khan Yunis, according to the IDF (see "Injury.").

15. (SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS:

-- UNRWA reported that two IDF bulldozers and two tanks set up sand barriers along the northern side of Kfar Darom settlement June 8.

16. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open June 9, with a major detour at Netzirim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was open June 8, and 3,971 laborers and 398 merchants crossed into Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was open June 8, and 625 laborers entered the zone.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers June 9, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open June 9.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures June 19.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed June 9. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi, except males aged 16-30.

17. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- UNRWA reported that Hamas organized a demonstration of some 5,000 Palestinians in Rafah to protest the reported desecration of the Koran in Megiddo prison. A similar demonstration was held in northern Gaza the same day.

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